

Excerpts From the Newly Disclosed Pentagon Papers on the Vietnam Talks

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WASHINGTON, June 27—Following are excerpts from the four volumes of the Pentagon papers dealing with efforts to reach a peace settlement in Vietnam, as made available today by the columnist Jack Anderson:

'65 Reports on Outlook for War By U.S. Intelligence Community

Section of Pentagon papers dealing with reports on outlook for Communists' activities, April 22, 1965. First section is attributed to "leading personalities of the United States intelligence community." Section in italics is the Pentagon analysts' explanation, which introduces comments by Adm. William F. Raborn Jr., then Director of Central Intelligence.

If present U.S. policies continue without the introduction of large additional forces or increased U.S. air effort, the Communists are likely to hold to their existing policy of seeking victory in the local military struggle in South Vietnam. They will try to intensify that struggle, supporting it with additional men and equipment. At the same time, D.R.V. air defenses will be strengthened through Soviet and perhaps Chinese aid.

If, however, the U.S. deepens its involvement by increasing its combat role and intensifying its air effort, the intelligence officers believed:

... that the Vietcong, North Vietnam and China would initially ... try to offset the new enemy strength by stepping up the insurgency, reinforcing the Vietcong with the men and equipment necessary. They would likely count on time being on their side and try to force the piecemeal engagement of U.S. troops under conditions which might bog them down in jungle warfare, hoping to present the U.S. with a de facto partition of the country. The Soviet Union ... would almost certainly acquiesce in a decision by Hanoi to intensify the struggle.

This lack of any real prospect of "give" on the enemy's part was also confirmed by Admiral Raborn, shortly after he had succeeded John McCone as Director of Central Intelligence. On the day of Raborn's swearing-in (April 28), the President had given him a letter from McCone which McCone had handed to the President as his last official act. The President had asked Raborn to prepare his own comments on McCone's views. Raborn's comments, circulated to Secretaries Rusk and McNamara on May 6, included the following:

Our limited bombing campaign and our present groundforce build-up in the South are not likely to exert sufficient pressure on the enemy to

cause him to meet our present terms in the foreseeable future. I note very recent evidence which suggests that our military pressures are becoming somewhat more damaging to the enemy within South Vietnam, but I am inclined to doubt that this damage is increasing at a rate which will bring him quickly to the conference table.

With particular reference to McCone's recommendation that the U.S. add much heavier air action against the North to its planned combat force deployment to the South, Raborn indicated his agreement, and expressed his belief that such an action would have the following consequences:

The D.R.V. is, in my view, unlikely to engage in meaningful discussions at any time in coming months until U.S. air attacks have begun to damage or destroy its principal economic and military targets. I thus concur with the U.S.I.D.'s judgment of 18 February 1965, that, given such U.S. punishment, the enemy would be 'somewhat more likely' to decide to make some effort to secure a respite, rather than to intensify the struggle further and accept the consequent risks.

And then he added the following advice:

Insofar as possible, we should try to manage any program of expanded bombings in ways which (1) would leave the D.R.V. an opportunity to explore negotiations without complete loss of face, (2) would not preclude any Soviet pressures on Hanoi to keep the war from expanding, and (3) would not suddenly produce extreme world pressures against us. In this connection, the timing and circumstances in which the bombings were extended northward could be of critical importance, particularly in light of the fact that there have been some indications of differing views between Moscow, Peking and Hanoi. For example, it would probably

be advantageous to expand bombings after, not before, some major new VC move (e.g., obvious concentration for imminent attack on Da Nang or Kontum) and after, not before, any current possibilities of serious negotiations have been fully tested. And such bombings should not be so regular as to leave no interval for the Communists to make concessions with some grace. Indeed, we should keep in mind the possibility of a pause at some appropriate time, which could serve to test the Communist intentions and to exploit any differences on their side.

'65 Note on Resumed Bombing

Message from Secretary of State Rusk to United States Ambassadors in Saigon, London and Ottawa, May 17, 1965.

You should inform Mr. Von Min immediately to inform that beginning Tuesday morning, Saigon time, bombing of North Vietnam will be resumed by U.S. and South Vietnamese forces, marking the end of a five-day suspension.

You should convey message from me that we regret that the reception of the other side to the idea of a pause was not merely negative but hostile. Gromyko told Rusk that our message to Dobrynin on subject was "insulting." Nevertheless, we do not exclude possibility of other such attempts in future.

There will be no public announcement of the resumption of bombing. When press questions are asked, it will be pointed out that there have been and may again be periods when no bombing will take place in response to operational factors and that we do not discuss these operational questions.

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Bombs for Peace?

The United States is a four-time loser in the bombing of North Vietnam's only steel plant. The fifth bombing last weekend again has halted production there, but it is unlikely that it will hamper North Vietnam's war effort any more significantly than did the other four. Nor is there any substantial military purpose to be achieved in the stepped-up aerial attacks this week in the Hanoi-Haiphong area, which undoubtedly are taking a heavy civilian toll.

The Pentagon Papers revealed the futility of bombing so-called strategic targets in underdeveloped North Vietnam. President Nixon and his aides may not have been willing to accept this Johnson Administration study, but a secret Nixon Administration analysis in 1969 by Henry Kissinger's National Security Council Staff along with seven other Government agencies reached a similar conclusion.

This first Kissinger National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM-1) showed that almost four years of American bombing destroyed \$500 to \$770 million of capital stock, military facilities and current production in North Vietnam. But aid from other Communist countries during this period totalled \$3 billion, four to six times as much. "In terms of total economic and military resources available to support the war, North Vietnam is better off today (1969) than it was in 1965," Defense Secretary Laird's office noted in NSSM-1.

Aid from the Soviet Union, China and other Communist countries averaged only \$115 million a year through 1964. But it was stepped up after the bombing began in 1965 and was in the neighborhood of \$1 billion a year by 1968. When the bombing was suspended, aid from those countries dropped off again.

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There has been no change in the commitment of Moscow and Peking to supply everything Hanoi needs to continue the war. In the 1965-68 period, Communist China even provided up to 50,000 transport troops to help keep roads and railways in repair between Hanoi and the Chinese border. The return of some of those troops now is hinted in a statement by Radio Hanoi that "new forces" have just joined North Vietnam's "communications and transportation forces."

President Nixon may be counting on the mining of Haiphong and other ports to increase North Vietnam's import problems, particularly in petroleum. Mr. Nixon has been forewarned since the 1969 NSSM-1 study that the capacity of the overland routes from China alone

was two and a half times larger than North Vietnam's combined sea and land import tonnage. The "smart bombs" and virtually unrestricted attacks now under-way on this transport network undoubtedly are hampering the flow. But even an unlimited bombing campaign would leave North Vietnam with enough material to carry on, the C.I.A. and Secretary Laird's office informed Mr. Nixon in NSSM-1.

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Differences between Moscow and Peking may cause some temporary supply difficulties. But a shift from Russia to China as major supplier is unlikely to reduce the flow of Soviet weapons and ammunition, virtually all of which has been coming overland across China all along. As for petroleum, a new pipeline from China may help to ease North Vietnam's problem, even if sections are bombed out at times.

The only effect of the bombing on the war is that it imposes hardships on the people of North Vietnam. It might damage morale—but never has in the past. It might influence North Vietnam's Politburo, now in the midst of an important policy review, to soften its negotiating position in Paris. But it never did so in the past, despite President Johnson's carefully calculated orchestration of bombing and peace offers.

More bombing is no more likely now to pressure Hanoi to accept American terms. De-escalation and a resumption of negotiations for a compromise settlement offer a better hope of peace.